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CONVERSATION WITH JAGOW,
FEBRUARY 27, 1929

(!N GERMAN)

I. Have you seen Sir Renneil Rodd's very friendly references to you in the third volume of his *Reminiscences*?

* /. Yes. I was always for good relations with England, and so was the Kaiser. He used to talk loudly and wildly, but I could always tell him what I thought when we were alone together. When I pointed out the objections to any policy or proposal, he was very reasonable. Tirpitz had great influence, but Biilow is chiefly to blame for the estrangement with England. He had no political principles, no system, except to stay in power. He did not dare to tell the Kaiser the truth.

I, He had fallen from power before your appointment as Foreign Minister. Did you know him well?

/. Very well indeed.

I. I fear Bethmann's task was hopeless, and yours too. You were both called in too late. The harm was done. Equally I feel that Grey could not be friends with France and Germany at the same time. The choice had been made before he took office.

/. Yes, the situation was pretty hopeless. War was practically inevitable, not necessarily in 1914 but some time.

/. I regret Germany gave Austria *carte blanche* on July 5, 1914. Of course you had to stand by her, but why did you not insist on her consulting you at every step?

/. We did not give her *carte blanche*. We expected she would tell us about the ultimatum in good time. I was continually asking Szogenyi for news.

/. I think you ought to have asked not only to be informed but to have been consulted about the ultimatum, for it was obviously a dangerous path. Yet the Kaiser always said that the matter was entirely one for Francis Joseph to decide. And many believe that Tschirschky was a firebrand. What do you think of his *role*?

/. Tschirschky carried out his instructions and did not exceed them, but he was a pessimist. He did not work or wish for war, but he expected it.

I, Sscgenyi reported to Vienna that, in telling him of Grey's proposal for a Conference, you said that the German Government was not in favour of it, and only handed it on because you had to do so. You have denied this, but most people in England prefer Szogeayi's report to your subsequent denial. / I know that, but I never said anything of the sort. Szogenyi was really past work. Some time before Serajeva one of the Foreign Office officials said to me, " Somebody must always look through Szogenyi's reports before they go to Vienna." I never said more to him than that we would not leave Austria in the lurch.